

INFLUENCING AFRICA: US-CHINA INVESTMENT COMPETITION FOR ALIGNMENT

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ABSTRACT

The great power competition between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China continues to develop. China has expanded its international presence aggressively due to its growing economic and military capabilities. This study focuses on the utility of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a means of soft power to affect the voting behavior of the countries of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) African Region Group. By comparing the voting coincidences of UNGA African states to the United States and China from 2003 to 2014, this paper shows that US FDI in African countries had no significant impact on the voting behavior of the UNGA African Region Group. Despite the higher level of investment by the United States, China had a higher voting coincidence with the African Region Group. This study suggests that FDI is not an effective soft power tool for the United States in its competition with China.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this body of work to my family. My Mother, Father, and Brother have been a constant source of support and have provided me with a wealth of knowledge. From our very unorthodox family dinner conversations, lively debates, international experience, and emotional games of Risk I am proud of and thankful for this family. To my parents, I want to thank them both for constantly pushing me to do my best and strive for better. It is a great comfort to know that they have been and will always be there to support me on my next adventure. To my brother, you have always played a pivotal role in my life: you have showed me that dreams can be achieved through hard work, persistence, and an adventurous spirit.

I want to thank all the friends, family friends, professors, teachers, and special people that have been in my life. You have each been an influence on me by either helping adjust my course or to selflessly providing for me when it is needed. It is always the little things that make the biggest difference. I am grateful for everything and glad that life on this small world allowed our paths to cross.

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of the Cold War (1947-1991), the United States of America (USA) maintained its status as a superpower and the world's hegemon (Layne 2006, pg. 12). The fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991 left a vacant position as the only international competing superpower to the USA. Since the end of the Cold War era, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has sought to assume this position as a rising competing superpower and has increased tensions in US-China relations. The PRC has gained momentum as a world-class threat due to its rise as an economic powerhouse with expanding military capabilities, and lucrative diplomatic relationships positioned against the USA (Layne 2006, pg. 15). The 21st century of international relations has developed an eerily similar bipolar atmosphere previously felt during the Cold War.

The current competition for influence between the USA and PRC is robust and diverse on the African continent.¹ African countries have become a new battlefield because of extensive economic and political opportunities, natural resources, and geographic significance that are important and applicable to the national interests of both the USA and PRC (Atlantic Council 2021, pg. 30). The competition for influence manifests in a variety of mechanisms; this study focuses on the utility of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a means of soft power to affect the voting behavior of the African Region Group in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly

¹ Soft power is defined as a persuasive approach to international relations, typically involving the use of economic or cultural influence. Soft power is the opposite because it strengthens cooperation rather than the conventional understanding of power that comes through the economic and military capabilities of hard power. This definition offers a basic understanding of the purpose of soft power, but it is meant to positively attract and persuade a targeted country.

(UNGA).² This study seeks to answer the question: can the United States use FDI as an effective tool against China to gain influence in Africa?

Initially, this study will set a foundation for the dynamics of great power competition. Next, it will describe briefly the background of US-African foreign policy and PRC-African foreign policy in the 21st century. Following this background will be a review of literature about the effect of FDI and foreign aid on voting behavior in international bodies. A comparison of FDI on the voting behaviors will be measured by African countries voting coincidences to show political alignment with the USA or with the PRC. A comparative analysis will help evaluate whether the FDI of the USA or of the PRC is an effective tool of soft power to influence the UNGA African Region group's voting behavior. This paper will conclude on the status of the US in its great power competition with the China on the African continent.

Great Power Competition

Great power competition was at its height during the Cold War between the USA and USSR. In this paper, the USA, PRC, and USSR represent superpower states with power coming from avenues of coercion, authority, and influence. In terms of international relations, a 'superpower' is a dominant country that can project power globally (Munro 2021). Power can be economic, military, cultural, geographical, and political (International Relations 2021).³ Power is

² FDI is defined as, "Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a category of cross-border investment in which an investor resident in one economy establishes a lasting interest in and a significant degree of influence over an enterprise resident in another economy (OECD 2021)."

³ The economic capabilities are often measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Product (GNP), and features of a country's economic system. The Military capability can range from numbers in a standing army, fighter jets, to harnessing nuclear weapons. Cultural capability can come from reputation to technology. Geographical capabilities are represented by natural resources and location. These can shape a country's economic and military-strategic placement in the international landscape. Finally, political capabilities can come from government systems, foreign policy, and population/demographics (International Relations 2021).

ever-evolving and changing based on current events, shifting relationships, and the perceived international balance of power.

The type of power expressed by a country can be coercive through the application of hard power or through the attraction of alignment via soft power. Hard power is intended to coerce, threaten, or force another country into the desired outcome (Nye 2004, pg. 256). The use of hard power is essential when it comes to the preparation of the battlespace against an adversary because it represents a country's capabilities and willingness (Eriksson and Norman 2011, pg. 421). The originator of the modern concept of soft power, Joseph Nye, outlined that soft power relies on three aspects: political values, culture, and foreign policy (Nye 2004, pg. 259). Soft power is defined as a persuasive approach to international relations, typically involving the use of economic or cultural influence (Nye 2004, pg. 256). Soft power strengthens cooperation rather than the conventional understanding of power that comes through the military capabilities of hard power (Nye 2004, pg. 259).

Attitudes towards the utility of soft power is conditional. Within the USA, soft power is seen, by some, as a less effective form because it does not produce immediate results or represent a state's capacity (Dargiel 2009, pg.1). In contrast, the PRC has taken a great interest in soft power to create impetus and boost Chinese international appeal (Albert 2018).

BACKGROUND

US 21st Century African Foreign Policy

Under President George W. Bush (2001-2009), US diplomatic efforts in African countries focused on humanitarian aid. US foreign policy in Africa funded an \$80 billion campaign as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) with the

primary goal: (1) to reduce the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Van de Walle 2010, pg. 10), (2) stem the spread of malaria; and (3) to invest in nation-building (Van de Walle 2010, pg. 3). The United States' nation building effort pushed for educational programs, good governance, and the development of democracy (Van de Walle 2010, pg. 9).⁴

Under President Obama's administration (2009-2017), US foreign policy focused on certain African countries to minimize terrorist activities through military interventions and activities. US policy aimed at providing leadership opportunities and addressing the power-food-water security nexus on the African continent. Also, during this time, the US expanded investment in a messaging campaign to stop the genocide in Darfur, to fight global poverty, and to expand prosperity on the African continent (Committee on Foreign Relations 2008).

Finally, under President Trump (2017-2021), US foreign policy in Africa used economic activities to increase business opportunities, investment initiatives, and advance the message of democracy. The US foreign policy favored pre-World War II foreign policy through "America First." This strategy saw a return to elements of isolationism, non-intervention, and protectionism to economically promote and place the USA in a better negotiating position against the PRC (Anton 2019). The US-Egypt relationship was readdressed under President Trump to strengthen the bilateral relationship and open more opportunities to mitigate the Nile Basin conflict.⁵ The US Government removed Sudan from the US Department of State list of

⁴ Regionally, US-African relations saw a strain with Zimbabwe from targeted sanctions to prevent the undermining of democratic reform and the introduction of instability in the South African region (U.S. Department of State 2020). Sudan also received targeted sanctions and experienced limited humanitarian aid needs due to the Darfur conflict (2003-2009) (U.S. Department of State 2020).

⁵ Growing conflict over entitled water rights and equity of water from the Nile River. The two primary sources of Nile's water come from the Blue and White Nile sources which merge in Sudan as the proper Nile River. The many countries that contribute to the Nile River system are designated as the Nile Basin. The Blue Nile flows through Ethiopia and Sudan, while the White Nile combines water sources from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi into the main flow through Uganda, South Sudan, and Sudan. The conflict is primarily between Nile Basin countries and Egypt and Sudan due to historical water agreements.

“state sponsors of terrorism” which brought necessary funding to sustain the fledgling democracy effort in the Abraham Accords. Nigeria nurtured a positive view of the USA and South Africa received large sums of aid. Additional initiatives were instituted to promote and continue proactive soft power within the African continent such as the Prosper Africa Initiative (Congressional Research Service 2020), and the Better Utilization of Investments Leading in Development (BUILD) Act (Congressional Research Service 2020).

Although US foreign policy in the 21st century touches on social, political, and economic areas of life on the African continent, it has not provided the same level of physical infrastructure and improvements efforts by the PRC.⁶ In stark contrast, Chinese foreign policy transformed from establishing ideological solidarity during the Cold War to a 21st century foreign policy that is driven by its growing economic capabilities to benefit the Chinese homeland.

China’s 21st Century African Foreign Policy

Starting with Chairman Jiang Zemin (1993-2003), China’s foreign policy was largely non-confrontational as the country saw a long period of growth and stability with the continuation of its socialist market economy. The PRC’s foreign policy worked to expand and improve cultural exports like educational programs and health diplomacy on the African continent.

With the dissolution of the USSR and the USA consumed with peacekeeping campaigns, global terrorism, and aiding in humanitarian crises, the PRC was able to exploit countries that did not have strong alignment to either superpower. During this time the PRC did not see

⁶ The US military aid to Egypt averages \$1.3 billion annually with the total US foreign aid package totaling \$1.5 billion (Plumer 2013). In contrast the PRC announced a \$45 billion plan to build Egypt a new capitol city. (El-Ghobashy and Fung 2016).

significant strategic involvement or prioritization of investment on the African continent (Muekalia 2004, pg. 7). Under the new leadership of Hu Jintao (2003-2013), the PRC's foreign policy started to emphasize influencing through soft power in Africa and Latin America. This marked the beginning of China's focus on international development programs and growing its status as a world power.

Chinese foreign policy transformed into extensive bilateral deals with countries in Africa and Latin America due to new investment deals and the view that these continents' raw resources were a strategic PRC security goal. With this change came the extension of PRC soft power into its version of health diplomacy in 2006 when China expressed a desire to continue medical support in Africa (Huang 2010, pg. 127). Additionally, the PRC opened its gates to the international community and symbolically debuted itself as a competing superpower by hosting the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Huang 2010, pg. 128).

Under Chairman Xi Jinping (2013-present) China's foreign policy grew more nationalistic as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was introduced and the US-China relations became tenser while the China-Russia relations saw improvements. The BRI gained 138 participant countries, making up over two-thirds of the world's population (Lynch and Zhu 2020). The estimated investment in the BRI sits at \$575 billion and is aimed at reaching \$1 trillion over the next 10 years (Schmid et al. 2020). China's foreign policy became much more aggressive and messaged an impactful presence to openly advance strategic Chinese capabilities on the African continent.

Activities to execute PRC interests through the BRI have been the most notable foreign policy coming from Chairman Xi and they illustrate a widespread use of soft power efforts by the PRC (Shinn 2019, pg. 77). At the BRI forum in 2017 Chairman Xi stated:

We should foster a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, and we should forge a partnership of dialogue with no confrontation, and a partnership of friendship rather than alliance. All countries should respect each other's sovereignty, dignity, and territorial integrity. Respect each other's development path and social systems and respect each other's core interests in major concerns... what we hope to create is a big family of harmonious coexistence (Jinping 2017).

While this rhetoric is appealing from a growing superpower, for the USA it represents the threat of the PRC becoming the next hegemon. With repair of the China-Russia relationship, the US-China relationship is strained from economic and trade wars. China encroaches into its version of neo-colonialism across various regions internationally, especially on the African continent. The competition for influence between the USA and PRC in Africa is heavily influenced by foreign policy posturing and strategic investment with competitors in mind.

In review, the foreign policies of the USA and PRC in the 21st century show a clear shift in the PRC course as China increasingly prioritized soft power strategies to influence the international community for the long-term. The evolution of US foreign policy during the Cold War built soft power into its fundamental messaging platform which easily expanded on being a liberating force with robust international good will and funding post-World War II construction.

In contrast, the PRC has messaged a consistent foreign policy through the course of three Chairmen and has now produced an aggressive posture with its new international role. The PRC has a clear stance on international issues which allows China to reap the benefits of messaging itself as a more capable, legitimate, and stable international ally via a consistent foreign policy and purposeful use of soft power. As China's foreign policy continues to utilize economic capabilities in its foreign aid, it is positioned to out-compete and outbid the USA very easily on the African continent.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature for this research study focuses on the influence the FDI and foreign aid have on voting behavior and political alignment and voting in international bodies. This research study relies on two studies on FDI, and twelve studies that cover the topic of foreign aid.

The Influence of FDI on Voting Behavior in International Bodies

The empirical literature on the influence of FDI on voting behavior is limited to two studies. The FDI study noted that African states that sought to attract and promote FDI flows into their countries also expected to increase their economic growth, thus implying FDI can make a significant contribution to expanding state economic capabilities (Seyoum et al. 2015, pg. 60). While this does not directly show an extension of this expectation into voting, it is one of the few studies that acknowledges FDI flow into a country and economic growth is recognized as a self-reinforcing relationship (Seyoum et al. 2015, pg. 60).

Another study addressed the overseas financing scheme known as the Chinese Commercially Oriented Financial Flows (COFFs) that guides PRC influence over other states with FDI or variations of non-development aid (Raess et al. 2017, pg. 1). The study concluded that a recipient state with increased Chinese FDI flows is closely politically aligned with the PRC (Raess et al. 2017, pg.18). Increased investment from the PRC is seen to have a direct effect on political realignment that indirectly shifts political alignment away from the USA (Raess et al. 2017, pg. 23). With the few observations available, this study finds that FDI does impact economic growth and can be a driver in political alignment (Raess et al. 2017, pg. 24)

The Influence of Foreign Aid on Political Alignment and Voting in International Bodies

Though there is a very limited amount of literature on the influence of FDI on voting behavior in international bodies, there is plenty of literature on the influence of foreign aid - another way in which money flows to another country - on political alignment and voting in international bodies. The routine practice of international vote-buying falls in line with the three tools of a statesman: logic, bribes, and threats (Lockwood 2013, pg. 98). The concept of vote-buying is defined as, "exchanges of valuable consideration for a vote or decision on a matter concerning the wider community of states (Lockwood 2003, pg. 99)." Examples of this practice are found in 2003 when the USA pledged money to Angola to support the UN Security Council vote for the Invasion of Iraq. In 2008 Iran paid \$200,000 for the Solomon Islands' UNGA votes to be against Israel (Lockwood 2013, pg. 98).

Interestingly, states receiving aid meant to influence their voting behavior are less inclined to make a decisive initial vote shift that will align with their donor state's preference. Vote shifts are frequent for smaller, poorer, and developing states in the international community (Brazys and Panke 2017, pg. 79). Smaller states hold priority for resolutions that are the most aligned with national interests and result in a voting behavior that reflects frequent votes in the category of absent or abstain. (Brazys and Panke 2017, pg. 71). However, once past the first vote shift threshold recipient states are significantly more likely to make a secondary shift turning them into serial vote shifters, with votes going back and forth (Brazys and Panke 2017, pg. 79). This indicates that foreign aid on smaller, poorer, and aid-dependent states can influence voting positions, instead of operating as a direct form of international vote buying (Brazys and Panke 2017, pg. 80). The economic assistance provided by the USA is tagged to promote US foreign

policy acting as “a price paid for political services rendered or to be rendered (Dreher and Sturm 2012, pg. 365).”

Foreign Aid Buys Political Alignment and Votes in International Bodies

Some research clearly shows that foreign aid is effective in buying political alignment and votes in international bodies. One very successful model of this is Japan’s activity in the International Whaling Commission (IWC) which shows an effective and strategic effort to buy votes. In 2001, the Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda stated “...if we are able to support the Japanese... the quid pro quo is that they are going to give us some assistance (Strand and Tuman 2012, pg. 415).” Countries like Antigua & Barbuda are microstate members of the IWC that have more to gain from supporting Japan’s pro-whaling position than opposing it. From a study done by Strand and Tuman, microstate members in the IWC received more aid than the non-microstates, and that the acceptance of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) by IWC microstates frequently indicated they are economically vulnerable enough to allow Japan the opportunity to strategically provide necessary aid to induce votes in their favor (Strand and Tuman 2012, pg. 422).

Another form of investment for influence can come from international institutions. In this case, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank also have the ability to influence the voting behaviors in the UNGA. Previous empirical literature states that developing states get better terms from the IMF due to their relationship with the USA and their UNGA voting behavior (Dreher and Sturm 2012, pg. 364). With international institutions seemingly acting as an outside factor to either reward or punish a states’ voting behavior in the UNGA due to their dependency on foreign trade, it serves to guide a state’s responsiveness to external influence

(Dreher and Sturm 2012, pg. 370). As a result, the study concludes that non-concessional loans do have a significant impact on voting behavior, while the USA acts as an outlier depending on additional World Bank support to influence a state's voting behavior (Dreher and Sturm 2012, pg. 376-378).

During the Cold War, the great power competition between the USA and USSR had a polarizing effect on the international community. With the end of the Cold War, the power dynamics changed quickly, and US foreign policy, foreign aid, and foreign assistance became the singular focus of criticism (Wang 1999, pg. 199). Since the demise of the USSR, US foreign policy has undergone accusations of being the cause of war and terrorism by regimes that do not benefit from US economic policy. Despite this criticism, the voting coincidence rates, and the total foreign aid provided by the USA to recipient states did correlate to a pattern that showed average coincidence rates falling or rising depending on the total foreign aid allocated (Wang 1999, pg. 203). The result of this linkage of UN voting coincidences and aid allocated by the USA during the post-Cold War supported the USA's decision-making pattern of rewarding deference or punishing defiance (Wang 1999, pg. 208). This course of action reinforced the voting coincidence of recipient states to exercise routine deference to UNGA resolutions that were in US national interests (Wang 1999, pg. 209).

A state's reliance on trade and aid for protection can determine its responsiveness to pressure (Wittkopf 1973, pg. 869). The application of bilateral and multilateral pressure can either persuade or coerce a state into doing what is desired. A need for ideological support and cooperation within the UN to compete against the USSR / Soviet Bloc drove the USA to openly use foreign aid (Wittkopf 1973, pg. 870). Although it would be logical to think the provision of foreign aid was to produce favorable voting patterns, instead it "rewarded enemies rather than

friends” (Wittkopf 1973, 878). The association of foreign aid and votes to influence the UNGA was seen in the USA and USSR, while many other donor states were indifferent to voting behaviors (Wittkopf 1973, pg. 887).

The US aid allocation and assistance was an effective means to influence and achieve foreign policy objectives (Dreher et al. 2008, pg. 140). In the 21st century, US foreign policy shifted away from great power competition of the Cold War to a Global War on Terror and has been the basis for the international allocation of US foreign aid (Dreher et al. 2008, pg. 140). Additionally, the relationship between foreign aid and the voting behavior in the UNGA and UN Security Council, the UN Security Council was identified as a more important area of concern than the UNGA for the USA (Dreher et al. 2008, pg. 141). *Dreher et al.* found that the USA was best able to buy votes with general support grants (2008, pg. 157). Overall, the study concludes that US foreign aid is effective in producing compliant voting behaviors from recipient countries.

With an understanding of the US foreign aid and US efforts to influence UNGA voting behaviors, the focus now turns to a new competitor, the PRC. Chinese foreign aid comes in various forms such as ODA, other financial flows (OOF), project /program-related aid, loans, and grants (Abudula 2018, pg. 3). The objective of Chinese foreign aid is to meet urgent needs of the recipient and be perceived as acting in a benevolent nature (Abudula 2018, pg. 12). Much of the Chinese foreign aid is provided with the purpose of being in opposition to the USA and Western countries. The PRC states it does not set political conditions and follows a long-standing foreign policy of "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence"⁷ and the “Principle of Non-

⁷ “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are as follows: (1) mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) mutual non-aggression; (3) mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; (4) equality and cooperation for mutual benefit; (5) peaceful co-existence (Abudula 2018, pg. 25).”

interference”⁸ (Abudula 2018, pg. 25)." The PRC's stated stance does not have metrics to indicate whether Chinese foreign aid is having any influence on voting behavior (Abudula 2018, pg. 53).

Foreign Aid Does Not Buy Political Alignment and Votes in International Bodies

Other scholars have found that foreign aid does not buy political alignment and votes in international bodies. The USA has generally assumed that achieving cooperation through military aid and assistance will increase its influence over a recipient state's domestic and foreign policy. This has been commonly perceived to be an effective practice for gaining cooperation (Sullivan et al. 2011, pg. 277). *Sullivan et al.* found that states receiving US military aid were less cooperative than non-recipient states and also that US military aid to a state produces a more defiant behavior from the population (Sullivan et al. 2011, pg. 290). As US military aid can operate independently from the recipient state's behaviors it can also complicate the desire to achieve specific goals. Concluding with the USA's growing dependency to produce foreign policy "good" while recipient states become increasingly uncooperative (Sullivan et al. 2011, pg. 291).

International vote-buying can potentially be done by means of inducement, reward, or punishment. A study by *Rai* indicates the USA's foreign aid during the Cold War was a more effective approach as an inducement, but for the USSR foreign aid was effective in influencing voting behaviors through rewards or punishments (Rai 1980, pg. 272). With the totality of

⁸ (1) equality and mutual benefit; (2) respect for sovereignty and no conditions attached; (3) reflecting the needs of the recipient countries and offering no-interest or low-interest loans; (4) assistance in self-reliance so as not to create dependence on China; (5) helping the recipient countries with projects that need less capital and quick returns; (6) aid in the forms of materials and equipment must be of high quality; (7) ensuring that local staff master technology transferred from China; and (8) equal treatment of Chinese experts and technicians and the local counterparts." Translated by Enlai in 1964). (Abudula 2018, pg. 30)"

foreign aid meant to influence voting behavior, the results showed foreign aid was moderately effective in influencing voting in Africa, Middle East, and South Asia (Rai 1980, pg. 274). US foreign aid in Africa and Latin America could change voting behavior as long as it was not meant to specifically meet US national interests (Rai 1980, pg. 275). Ultimately US foreign aid that is meant to meet the needs of the recipient country rather than being a tool for the USA can create foreign policy “good.”

When comparing democratic states to non-democratic states, the voting behavior by democratic states are not consistent with that of the USA. As a result, the study by *Carter and Stone's* voting behavior reflected more democracies opposing the US position on international issues than nondemocracies except on resolutions that have direct implication to their relationship with the USA and alignment to US foreign policy (Carter and Stone 2015, pg. 3). With the likelihood for opposition from presumed allies, the USA often targets democratic states to reward or threaten them into compliance rather than non-democracies (Carter and Stone 2015, pg. 3). While the use of foreign aid is effective for the USA to use to influencing voting behaviors it does have limitations as seen by the many UNGA resolutions passing despite the USA's opposition (Carter and Stone 2015, pg. 30). Additionally, poorer and more vulnerable UN members, remain resistant to US pressure due to strictly held preferences that clash with US objectives (Carter and Stone 2015, pg. 30).

While the empirical literature suggests that the USA can influence UNGA voting behavior with foreign aid, it is not conclusive. Many other studies suggest the type and approach to the allocation of foreign aid can also be influential factors leaving a correlation. Additionally, the foreign policy of the USA that guides aid, assistance, and programs can be a large driver in

the international voting coincidences felt in the UNGA. Especially for the developing states that depend on external trade flows and foreign aid to progress.

With the current great power competition between the USA and PRC, the influence wielded by the USA has been diminishing as the PRC continues long-term, highly visible programs that are meeting the demands of recipient states (Natsios 2020, pg. 110). Setting Africa as the battleground, strategic investment and development assistance by the USA is necessary to protect US national and international interests (Natsios 2020, pg. 116). While this great power competition continues to evolve this study will be evaluating an alternative to foreign aid by evaluating the relationship of FDI and UNGA voting behavior towards the USA and PRC. Additionally, using this notion of African countries as a battleground will be the foundation for data on FDI by the USA and PRC related to the African member states' UNGA voting coincidences.

HYPOTHESIS

This study will evaluate the relationship between FDI and UNGA voting coincidences between the USA and PRC. Null Hypothesis: The FDI by the USA and/or PRC had no significant impact on voting coincidence of the African Region Group in the UNGA. Alternative Hypothesis: The FDI by the USA and/or PRC influence the voting coincidence of the African Region Group in the UNGA.

METHODS AND DATA

This study compares the voting coincidences of the African Region Group in the UNGA to the USA and PRC. Specifically, this study investigates whether the FDI from the United

States into African states can influence voting coincidences and bring favorable political alignment in the UNGA. This study will cover the period of 2003-2014 and will provide descriptive statistics measuring frequency and central tendency.

For the FDI dataset, the USA and PRC the data comes from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA 2021), and the Johns Hopkins China Africa Research Initiative (CARI 2020). The available data set for FDI flowing from the USA and the PRC to Africa is during the period 2003-2019. The voting coincidences originated from a data set on the voting records of the UNGA from 1946 to 2019. Due to limited access from an oversized file, the voting data that was available to review only went until 2014, thus creating a time frame of 2003 to 2014. This timeframe is a reasonable period to study because US foreign policy and international activities regarding Africa were generally consistent throughout this period. Also, this 2003 to 2014 timeframe allows for atmospheric context to US-Africa relations and China-Africa relations leading up to the introduction of the BRI by Chairman Xi Jinping in 2013.

From this data, the top five African states receiving FDI from the USA were Algeria, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, and South Africa. The PRC's top African FDI recipient states were: Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The USA and PRC share two countries in common among their top five FDI countries these are: Nigeria and South Africa. An added data point for investment was the USA's total FDI in Africa, and for comparison, the total FDI from the PRC in Africa. This study will compare FDI from the USA and PRC in the United States' top five African Recipient states from 2003 to 2014.

The methodology for calculating vote coincidence is a modification of an approach used by the US Department of State (U.S. Department of State 2019, pg. 3). Additionally, a cross-

comparison was conducted to evaluate the PRC voting pattern onto the USA. The votes were placed into four voting categories:

- Yes votes by a state on UNGA resolutions;
- No votes by a state on UNGA resolutions;
- Abstain votes by a state that are neutral to the UNGA resolution; and
- Absent votes by a state that withheld or was not present.

Utilizing the dataset provided by Harvard on the UNGA voting records from 2003-2014 there were a total of 853 adopted resolutions (Voeten et al. 2009). Within the UNGA there are 54 African member states apart of the African Region Group out of 193 total member states. The African region group makes up 28% of the total membership of the UNGA. Additionally, 14 African member states hold seats on the Economic and Social Council (54 total member states), and 13 seats are held on the Human Rights Council (47 total member states). The African Region Group holds the most weight in the UN compared to the Asian and Pacific Group (27.5%), Latin American & Caribbean Group (GRULAC, 17%), Western Europe and Other Groups (WEOG, 15%), and Eastern European Group (12%) (UN 2021). Within the African Region Group there was the addition of South Sudan in 2011. Other factors that influence the count of African countries and vote calculations include the changes to the formal names of member states such as Swaziland to Eswatini, the variation of Cape Verde as Cabo Verde, Libyan Arab Jakarta as Libya, and various differing spelling of Côte D'Ivoire as CUte D'Ivoire.

The vote coincidence was calculated by giving Yes and No votes a 1, Abstain votes were a 0.5, Absent votes were a 0. The Yes, No, Abstain, and Absent categories of votes, from UNGA, adopted resolutions (853 total), are tallied for the USA, PRC, and each the United States top five African FDI recipient states for each calendar year (range of January 1 to December 31).

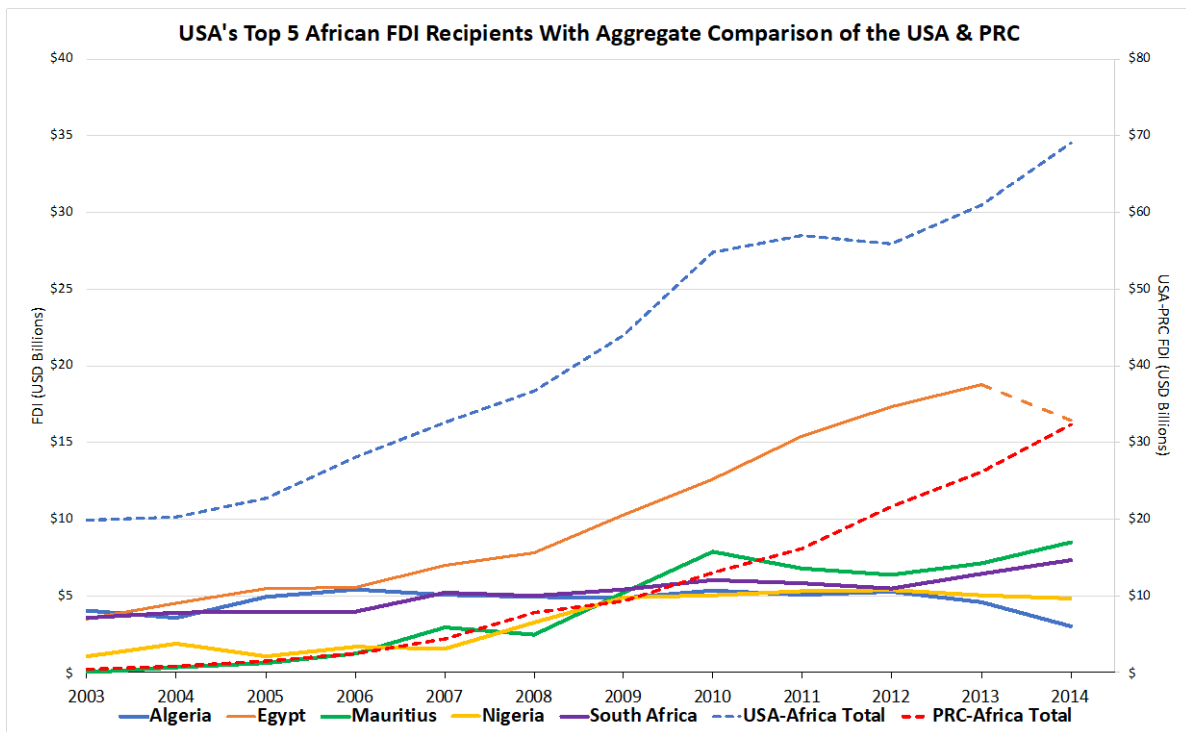
The respective categories of voting from each country are compared to the USA and PRC, and finally PRC to the USA. Within a voting category, the minimum value between the two states is taken (for example if Country X has 100 No votes and Country Y has 50 No votes, then the votes from Country Y are taken). Between the two states, all categories are added together (excluding Absent votes) and divided by the total amount of resolutions (853) creating the coincidental vote percentage (%). The UNGA voting coincidences are a comparison from 2003 to 2014 with:

- The United States top five African FDI recipient states with the USA.
- The United States top five African FDI recipient states with the PRC.
- The PRC with the USA.

DISCUSSION

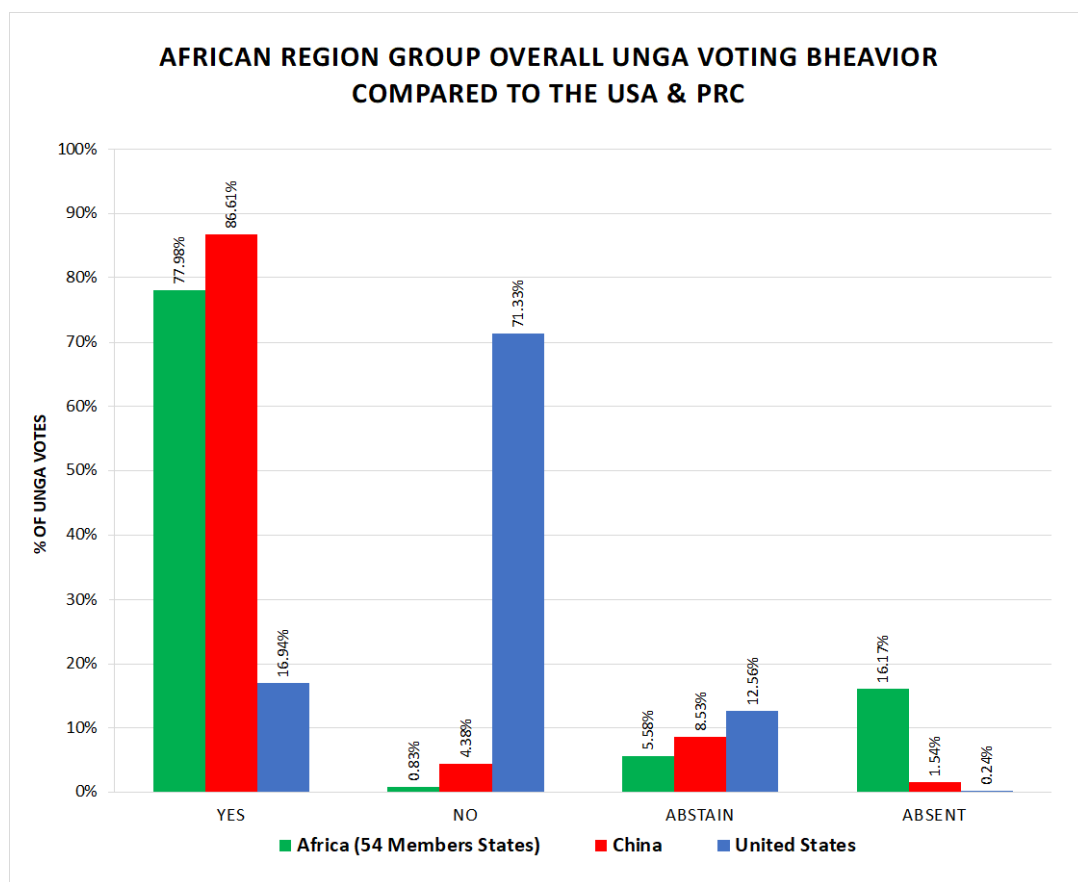
The overall investment of the USA into African states is consistently double the amount spent by the PRC. Additionally, the United States' top five African FDI recipient states from the time frame of 2003-2014 were: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, and South Africa. In **Graph 1** the data point for Egypt in 2014 has a different pattern (dashed line) because data from the BEA was non-publishable and confidential information (OECD 2021). As a result, the data has been interpolated by using the known 2013 and 2015 figures for American FDI. This results in an estimated amount of \$16,423 million that is consistent with the previous year's decreases in FDI.

Graph 1. USA's Top 5 African FDI Recipients with Aggregate Comparison of USA and PRC FDI into the African Continent.



When looking at **Graph 2** the voting trend is represented for the United States, PRC, and African Region Group (54 member states). A review of this trend immediately suggests that the PRC and African Region Group vote Yes frequently, while the USA votes No with little support or alignment with the African Region Group. The data shows that the African Region Group prefers to vote Absent or Abstain rather than voting No with the USA.

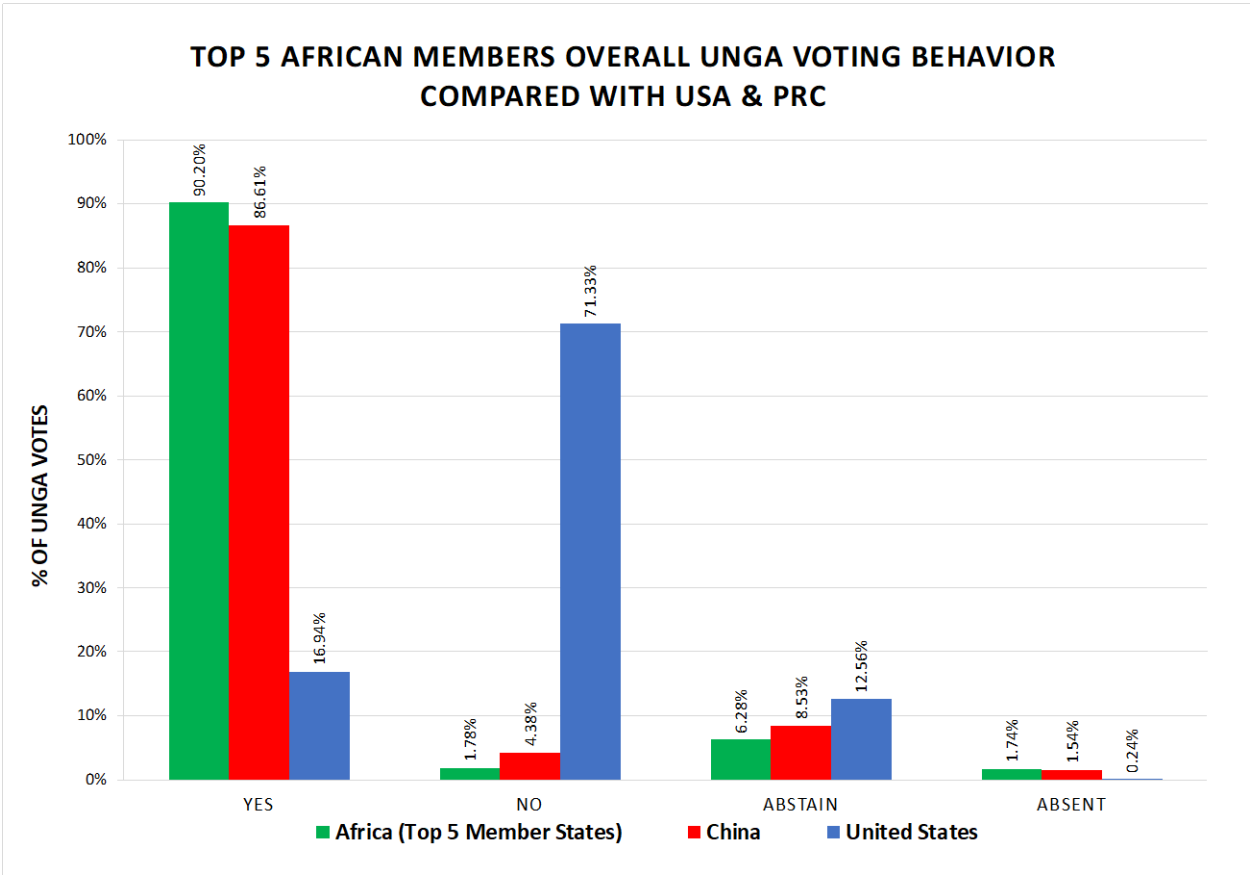
Graph 2. African Region Group Overall UNGA Voting Behavior Compared to the USA & PRC.



Again, the representation by **Graph 3** shows the voting behavior of the United States' top five African FDI recipient states to be a similar representation of the entire African Region group. The African region group and the PRC vote Yes frequently and demonstrate a similar

voting behavior while the USA maintains a voting behavior of No votes with minimal support or alignment from its top five FDI African recipient states. The data continues to show the lack of shared voting behavior between the United States and African states.

Graph 3. Top 5 African FDI Recipients Overall UNGA Voting Behavior Compared with the USA & PRC.



With the UNGA voting records from 853 adopted resolutions, the United States' top five FDI African recipient states voting coincidences were compared to the voting pattern of the USA and PRC from 2003-2014. **Table 1** shows the process of calculating voting coincidence and represents the average vote coincidences from 2003-2014 between the United States' top five recipient countries and the USA, the United States top five recipient countries and the PRC, and

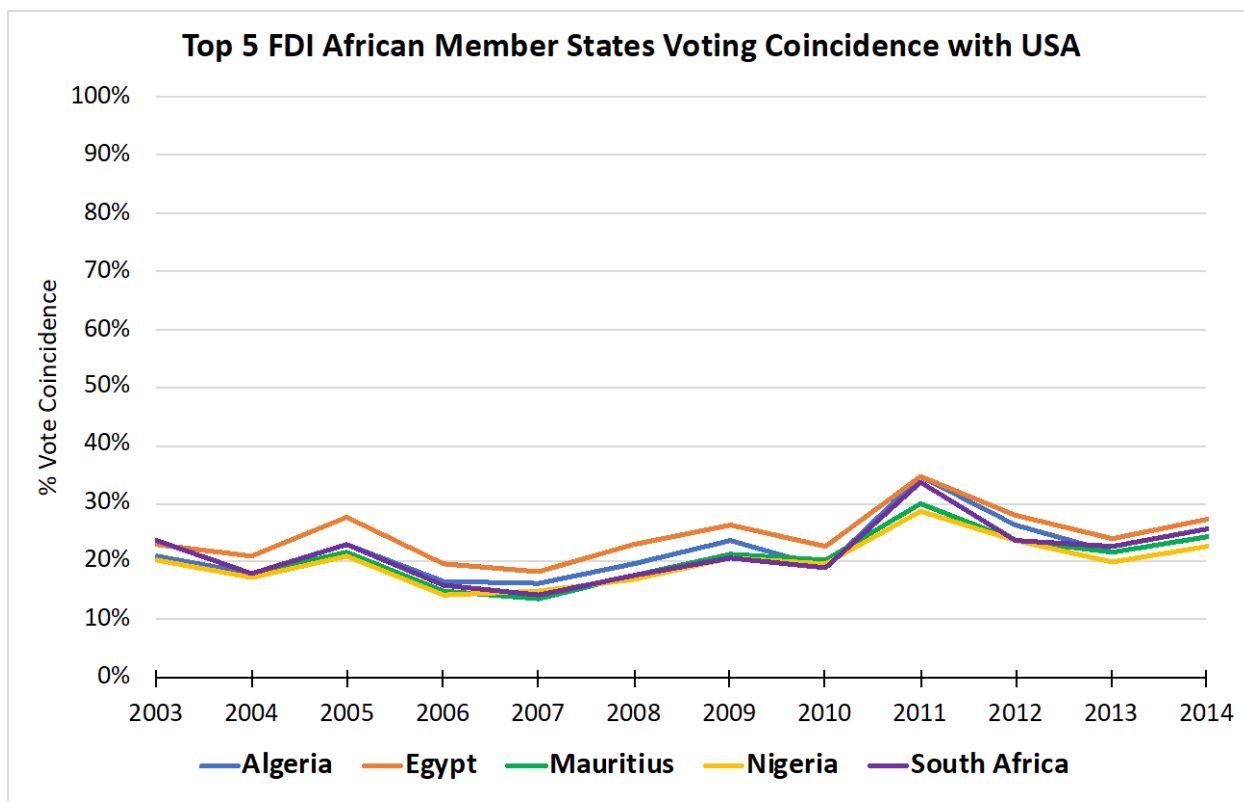
the PRC's voting coincidence with the United States. Overall, the table shows the low average of vote coincidences for the USA while the PRC receives a high average of coincidences. The average voting coincidences of the PRC with the USA differ from each other at much higher rates than the averages between the top five African recipient states with the USA.

Table 1. Vote Coincidence Representing the Cumulated Averages from 2003-2014.

Country	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Total		
Algeria	785	25	37	6	853		
Egypt	755	35	60	3	853		
Mauritius	773	2	67	11	853		
Nigeria	765	5	42	41	853		
South Africa	769	9	62	13	853		
PRC	731	37	72	13	853		
USA	143	602	106	2	853		
						Average	
USA-Top 5	Algeria	143	25	18.5	2	186.5	21.86%
	Egypt	143	35	30	2	208	24.38%
	Mauritius	143	2	33.5	2	178.5	20.93%
	Nigeria	143	5	21	2	169	19.81%
	South Africa	143	9	31	2	183	21.45%
PRC-Top 5	Algeria	731	25	18.5	6	774.5	90.80%
	Egypt	731	35	30	3	796	93.32%
	Mauritius	731	2	33.5	11	766.5	89.86%
	Nigeria	731	5	21	13	757	88.75%
	South Africa	731	9	31	13	771	90.39%
USA - PRC	143	37	36	2	216	25.32%	

Graph 4 again shows the voting coincidences of the United States' top five recipient countries with the USA from 2003-2014. With the range of voting coincidences going as low as 13% and as high as 34%. Again, these results show the very low voting coincidence of the United States' top five recipient countries and reveals the USA has weak political alignment.

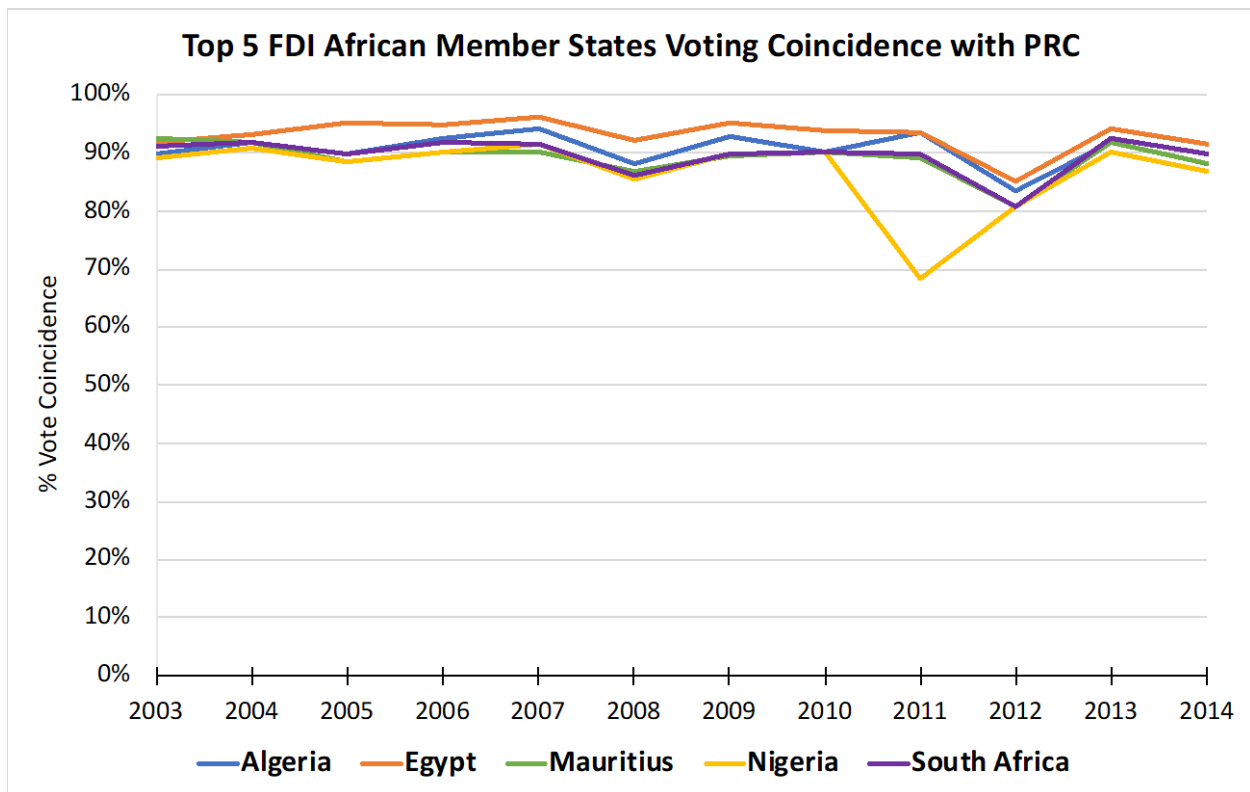
Graph 4. Top 5 FDI African Member States Voting Coincidence with the USA.



In **Graph 5**, the PRC's voting coincidence with the United States top five FDI African Member states has a range between 80-95%. The PRC sees a significantly higher voting coincidence than the USA with the latter's top five FDI recipient African states. Nigeria's voting behavior in 2011 is an outlier with a 68% voting coincidence when Nigeria had more Absent votes than normal. Several notable events in 2011 may have been an influential factor in Nigeria's outlier voting behavior. For instance, events like the Nigerian Presidential Election, the bombing of the UN Headquarters perpetrated by Boko Haram, and significant pressure from the USA to vote pro-Israeli on resolutions over the Palestinian question. Lastly, and perhaps most important factor is Nigeria's Ambassador Joy Uche Angela Ogwu serving as the President of the UN Security Council from 2010-2011. Nigeria's many abstentions and absent votes follows suit

with literature representing a routine exercise of deference to the US interests (Wang 1999, pg.209).

Graph 5. Top 5 FDI African Member States Voting Coincidence with PRC.



The UNGA voting trends on specific issues like the Palestinian question show a larger desire internationally and among African states to either abstain or be absent on resolution votes that are important to the USA⁹. This voting behavior is illustrated in **Table 2**, in A/RES/66/76 "Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories." The UNGA vote was 86 Yes, 9 No, and 75 Abstain, and 23 Absent. The USA voted No, but notably, Nigeria was Absent

⁹ Gabon and Bosnia and Herzegovina also felt pressure from the USA in 2011 because they were new members of the UN Security Council from 2010-2011.

for the vote.¹⁰ Amongst the UNGA overall vote (highlighted) and the majority of the African Region Group majority (indicated with a ^) was in line with the PRC vote of Yes.

Table 2. 2011 African Region Group Vote on A/RES/66/76 (Palestinian Question)

2011 African Region Group Vote on A/RES/66/76 (Palestinian Question)	
Yes	31
No	0
Abstain	9
Absent	14
USA	No
PRC	Yes ^

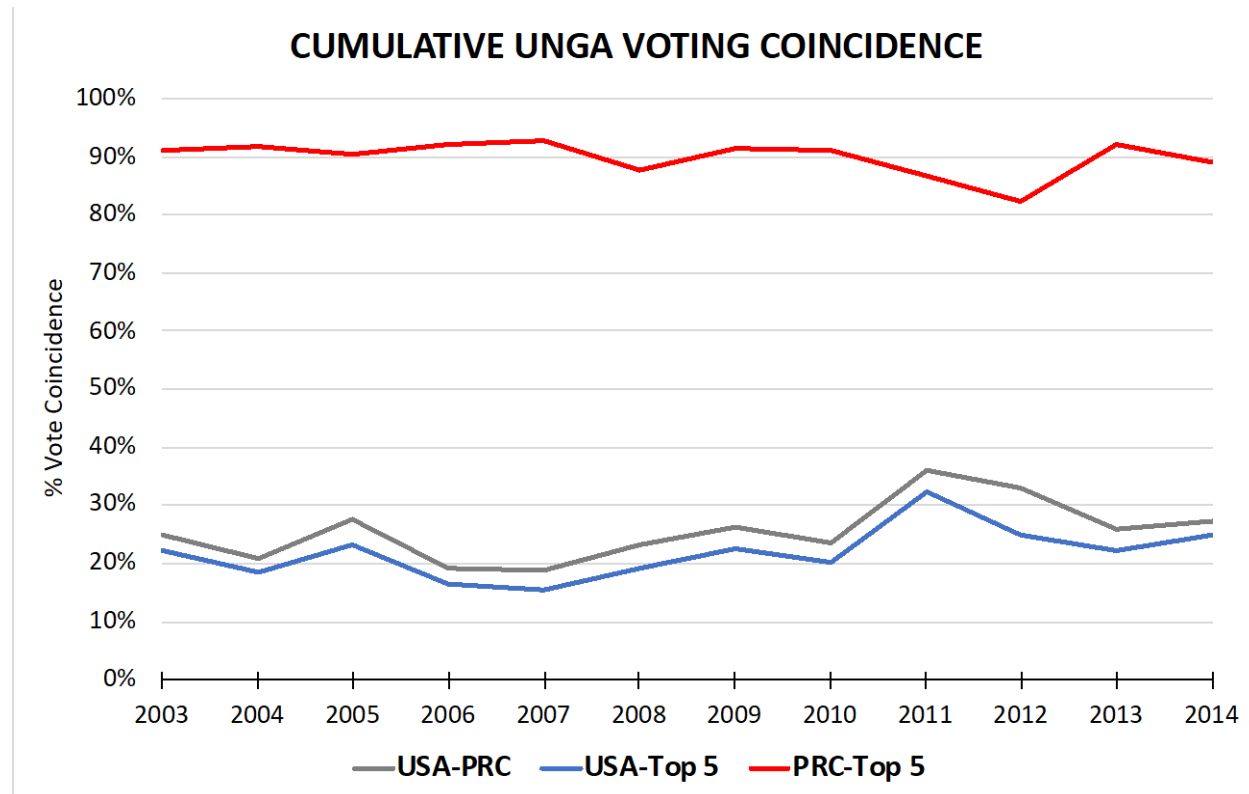
With the practice of vote buying, the non-member seats on the UN Security Council are also a hot commodity. There are ten seats available with rotating members serving two-year terms, while the other five seats are held by permanent members: USA, PRC, Russian Federation, France, and Great Britain (UN 2021). Within this smaller council, vote alignment is crucial and contributes to the USA's belief that it can buy votes with foreign aid since, a non-permanent state elected to the UN Security Council sees a significant increase in US foreign aid by 59% and UN aid by 8% (Kuziemko and Werker 2006, 905). Given this result, the international vote-buying seems to be most prevalent around the UN Security Council to influence and induce voting behaviors rather than members of the UN General Assembly.

The overall voting coincidences, shown in **Graph 6**, between the US and its top five African FDI recipient states were the lowest (blue trendline). The overall voting coincidences for the PRC and the United States' top five African FDI recipient states were the highest on the

¹⁰ The votes from Gabon was Absent, and Bosnia voted to Abstain.

graph (red trendline). With the cross-comparison of the USA and PRC, the voting coincidences (Gray trendline) were above the rate seen with the USA and the United States' top five African FDI recipient states.

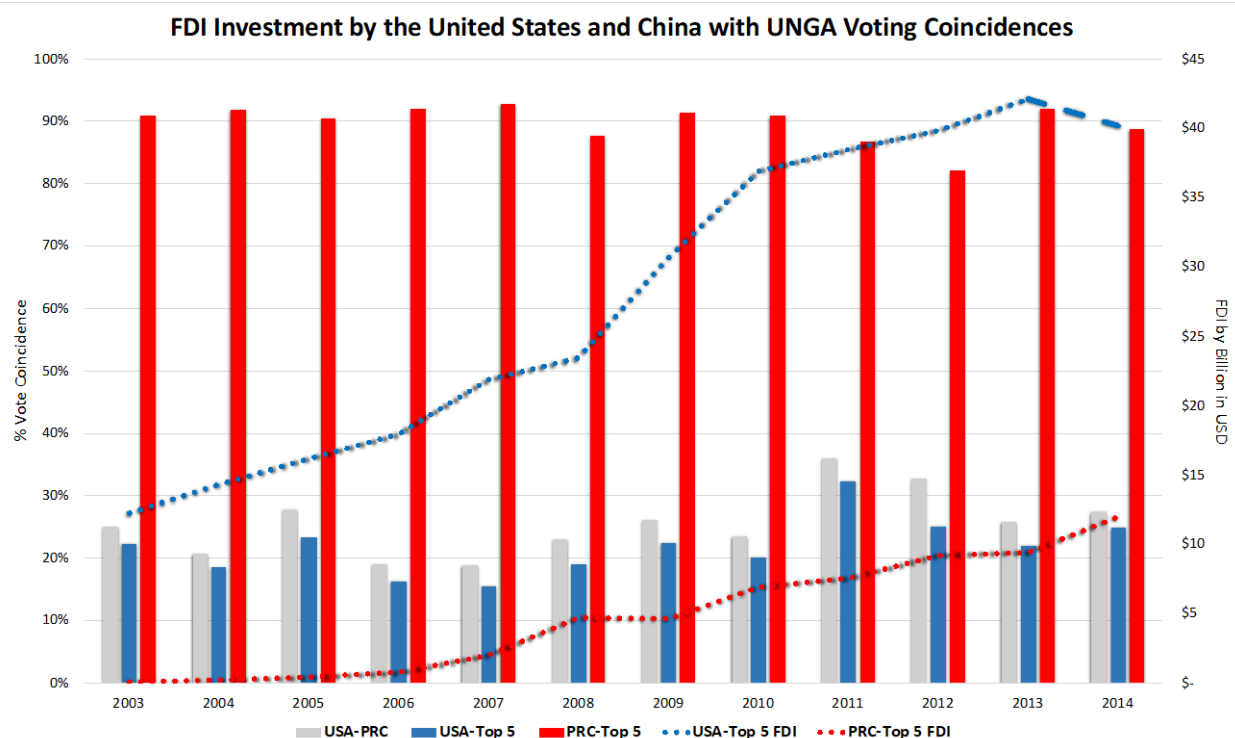
Graph 6. Cumulative UNGA Voting Coincidences.



A review of the UNGA voting data shows that the USA and PRC are more aligned in their voting than the United States' top five African FDI recipient states are with the USA. However, many of these resolutions with shared interest from the USA and PRC were on topics like the Death Penalty, Combatting Illicit Brokering Activities, Law of the Sea, etc. Relating to the literature on the voting behaviors of democracies and non-democracies (Carter and Stone 2015).

Graph 7 is a representation of the combination of FDI and voting coincidences. The overall representation provides a visual of high voting alignment between the PRC and the United States' top five African FDI recipient states. Despite the high FDI investment by the USA, the top five African FDI recipient states voting coincidence is low and less than the voting coincidences of the USA and PRC. Again, the dashed line for US FDI investment is due to the missing Egyptian data and a calculated estimate based on the FDI data available for 2013 and 2015. The change in voting behavior in 2011 and 2012 may be attributed to Egypt's parliamentary elections and the political shift with the Muslim Brotherhood's victory with President Mohamed Morsi.

Graph 7. FDI Investment by the United States and China with UNGA Voting Coincidences.



The data in Graph 7 suggests FDI from the USA has no significant impact on the African Region Group voting coincidence, but FDI from the PRC has an impact on the voting coincidences of the African Region Group.

While the data shown in the previous graphs and tables represent the US FDI and voting coincidences from 2003-2014, the legacy of alignment with the PRC is illustrated in **Table 3**. In this table, the 2019 voting behavior of the African region group members is reflected on issues tied to the USA and PRC. While the voting among the two is meant to be in direct opposition, the vast majority of voting patterns by African Region Group indicate voting that is aligned with PRC interests.

Table 3. 2019 UNGA African Region Group Votes on Relevant Issues for the USA & PRC.

2019 UNGA African Region Group Votes on Relevant Issues for the USA & PRC						
Vote Category	Cuba (A/RES/74/7)	Israel (A/RES/74/87)	Nuclear Disarmament (A/RES/74/45)	Crimea (A/RES/74/251)	Rohingya (A/RES/74/246)	Uyghur (Letter Signatures)
Yes	54	29	47	2	37	0
No	0	0	0	3	1	18
Abstain	0	10	2	18	10	0
Absent	0	15	5	31	6	36
USA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes ^	Yes*
PRC	Yes ^	Yes ^	Yes ^	No ^	No	No ^

Within the table above the yellow highlighting indicates the majority vote by the UNGA, the ^ represents the African region group majority, and the * represents the unofficial participation of the USA and a symbolic representation for western democracies.

A significantly controversial vote in this table is on the issue of the Uyghur population in China's Xinjiang region. This international issue reflects concern about China's seat on the Human Rights Council (HRC) despite continued Chinese human rights abuse of the Uyghur populations. In contrast, the PRC considers the Uyghur's population to be tied to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a source of domestic terrorism. The USA removed the group from its terror watchlist in 2020, possibly in response to concerns about human rights'

abuses by China (Deutsche Welle 2020). This issue has developed out of a series of letters and revealed the influence wielded by the PRC in the UN and over the African Region Group to achieve their diplomatic objectives.

European and Western member states initiated the dispute by condemning the human rights abuses with the “first letter” on July 8, 2019. The total signatory were 22 UN member states, made on the behalf of 39 other member states, and did not have the USA’s direct involvement (Yellinek 2020). The rebuttal from the PRC came in a "second letter" on July 12, 2019, with 50 UN member state signatures. Of these signatories, the membership was a diverse set of member states from the African, Asia & Pacific, and GRULAC Region Groups (Yellinek 2020) with a total of 18 member states from the African Region Group. The PRC received support from states on the HRC with seven member states of the African Region Group, six member states from the Asia & Pacific Region Group, three member states from GRULAC that are on the HRC. This totaled approximately 16 out of 47 member states of the HRC clearly stating support, and openly denying allegations of human rights abuses, in alignment with the PRC.

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to determine whether the United States can use FDI as an effective tool against China to gain influence in Africa. After reviewing the limited amount of empirical literature on the effectiveness of foreign aid as a tool in international vote-buying and influencing political alignment towards the USA there were varied outcomes. While the US government believes that foreign aid is an essential tool to influence states in the international community, this study shows FDI from the United States had no impact on voting alignment in the UNGA. In

contrast, the FDI from the PRC on the African continent illustrated accurate political alignment and higher voting coincidence in the UN African Region Group. However, this may be due to predetermined alignment to China from alternative influential factors, so it is possible neither the USA nor PRC can influence alignment with FDI on the African continent.

So, can the USA counter the influence of the PRC by means of investment in Africa? This study indicated that the United States is less able than China to influence political alignment and voting in the UNGA African Region Group. The implication for US foreign policy is a choice to align voting behaviors with the African Region Group and evaluate the value of US FDI compared to the PRC. The USA will also need to reevaluate its international status as the hegemon and reassess areas of prior prominence with all African member states.

While it may be easy to identify the PRC as the primary adversary of the United States on the African continent, it is still too early to project a Cold War bipolarity of global relationships. The growing presence of China on an international scale was due to a purposeful shift in foreign policy by Chairman Jinping that focused on soft power for a long-term benefit. While the USA utilizes soft power, it does not solely rely on economic or cultural influence as a strategic commitment to soft power or maintain a long-time horizon (Natsios 2020, pg. 114). The data presented here suggests that there are high levels of US FDI, but US FDI has no impact on vote coincidence and political alignment. Follow-up research will be needed to understand why and where the US FDI is falling short. As some research suggests problems with US investment and foreign aid being inflexible or devoted to sectors and industries the recipient countries do not find are providing adequate stimulation for economic growth (Natsios 2020, pg. 106).

While it can be easy to conclude the United States is facing a losing battle to counter the PRC in Africa, efforts with FDI are dynamic and do not have a defined end date. Just as

adjustments can be made to the amounts of US foreign aid, US foreign policy can evaluate the use of FDI to counter China on the African continent. As the PRC continues to utilize soft power and establish itself as a superpower of choice on the African continent, the USA will continue to have opportunities to reclaim influence and counter the PRC.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Darby G. Watts was born in Virginia in 1999. From then on, she lived and moved to more unique places than much of her peer group. With a desire to continue her athletics and academics she entered an accelerated program at Lynn University in Fall of 2017. Balancing an accelerated collegiate student-athlete lifestyle she graduated in the Winter of 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts was in Criminal Justice and a minor in Political Science. Continuing her desire for higher education she was accepted and quickly attended Johns Hopkins University in the Spring of 2020. As of May 2021, she will have earned a Master of Arts in Global Security Studies from the Advanced Academic Program with a concentration in Strategic Studies.